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PREFACE

TO A

GRAMMAR

OF THE

BENGAL LANGUAGE.

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PREFACE.

THE wisdom of the Britiſh Parliament has within theſe few years taken a deciſive part in the internal policy and civil adminiſtration of its Aſiatic territories; and more particularly in the Kingdom of Bengal, which, by the moſt formal act of authority in the eſtabliſhment of a Supreme Court of Juſtice, it has profeſſedly incorporated with the Britiſh Empire. Much however ſtill remains for the completion of this grand work;

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and we may reaſonably preſume, that one of its moſt important deſiderata is the cultivation of a right underſtanding and of a general medium of intercourſe between the Government and its Subjects; between the Natives of Europe who are to rule, and the Inhabitants of India who are to obey. The Romans, a people of little learning and leſs taſte, had no ſooner conquered Greece than they applied themſelves to the ſtudy of Greek: They adopted its Laws even before they could read them, and civilized themſelves in ſubduing their enemies. The Engliſh, who have made ſo capital a progreſs in the Polite Arts, and who are maſters of Bengal, may, with more eaſe and greater propriety, add its Language to their acquiſitions: that they may explain the benevolent principles of that legiſlation whoſe decrees they inforce; that they may convince while they command; and be at once the diſpenſers of Laws and of Science to an extenſive nation. This ſubject has hitherto been utterly diſregarded in Europe; and it is ſcarcely believed that Bengal ever poſſeſſed a native and peculiar dialect of its own, diſtinct from that idiom which, under the name of *Moor's*, has been ſuppoſed to prevail over all India. To remove theſe prejudices, and to contribute my ſlender mite to the public ſervice, I have attempted the following grammatical explanation of the vernacular language of

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Bengal: in which my principal aim has been to comprehend every thing neceſſary to be known; not contenting myſelf with a ſuperficial or partial view, nor confining my obſervations to the more obvious particularities. A ſhort treatiſe, when preceded by other more copious and diffuſive compilations on the ſame ſubject, may perhaps paſs for a judicious abſtract, or an elegant compendium; but every omiſſion of the writer who hath choſen an unhandled topic will be imputed to ignorance or neglect, by thoſe whoſe ſubſequent diſcoveries may have furniſhed more complete information.

The grand Source of Indian Literature, the Parent of almoſt every dialect from the Perſian Gulph to the China Seas, is the Shanſcrit; a language of the moſt venerable and unfathomable antiquity; which although at preſent ſhut up in the libraries of Bramins, and appropriated ſolely to the records of their Religion, appears to have been current over moſt of the Oriental World; and traces of its original extent may ſtill be diſcovered in almoſt every diſtrict of Aſia. I have been aſtoniſhed to find the ſimilitude of Shanſcrit words with thoſe of Perſian and Arabic, and even of Latin and Greek: and theſe not in technical and metaphorical terms, which the mutuation of refined arts and improved manners might have occaſionally inntroduced; but

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in the main ground-work of language, in monosyllables, in the the names of numbers, and the appellations of such things as would be first discriminated on the immediate dawn of civilization. The resemblance which may be observed in the characters upon the medals and signets of various districts of Asia, the light which they reciprocally reflect upon each other, and the general analogy which they all bear to the same grand Prototype, afford another ample field for curiosity. The coins of Assam, Napaul, Cashmeere and many other kingdoms are all stamped with Shanscrit letters, and mostly contain allusions to the old Shanscrit Mythology: the same conformity I have observed on the impressions of seals from Bootan and Tibet. A collateral inference may likewise be deduced from the peculiar arrangement of the Shanscrit alphabet, so very different from that of any other quarter of the world. This extraordinary mode of combination still exists in the greatest part of the East, from the Indus to Pegu, in dialects now apparently unconnected, and in characters compleatly dissimilar; but is a forcible argument that they are all derived from the same source. Another channel of speculation presents itself in the names of persons and places, of titles and dignities, which are open to general notice, and in which, to the farthest limits of Asia, may be found manifest

manifeſt traces of the Shanſcrit. The meagre remnants of Coptic antiquities afford no ſcope for compariſon between that idiom and this primitive tongue: but there ſtill exiſts ſufficient grounds for conjecture that Egypt has but a diſputable claim to its long-boaſted originality in language, in policy and in religion. In ſupport of this opinion I ſhall mention only one circumſtance. The Raja of Kiſhenagur, who is by much the moſt learned and able antiquary which Bengal has produced within this century, has very lately affirmed, that he has in his own poſſeſſion Shanſcrit books which give an account of a communication formerly ſubſiſting between India and Egypt; wherein the Egyptians are conſtantly deſcribed as diſciples, not as inſtructors; and as ſeeking that liberal education and thoſe ſciences in Hindoſtan, which none of their own countrymen had ſufficient knowledge to impart. The few paſſages which are extant in the antient Greek authors reſpecting the Bracmans at the ſame time that they receive a freſh light from this relation, very ſtrongly corroborate its authenticity.

But though theſe ſeveral proofs of the former prevalence of the Shanſcrit are now thinly ſcattered over an immenſe continent, and interſperſed with an infinite variety of extraneous matter, ariſing from every poſſible revolution in the manners

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and principles of the nations, who have by turns cultivated or deſtroyed it; that part of Aſia between the Indus and the Ganges ſtill preſerves the whole language pure and inviolate; ſtill offers a thouſand books to the peruſal of the curious, many of which have been religiouſly handed down from the earlieſt periods of human exiſtance.

The Jeſuit Dupont has miſled many ſubſequent writers, by his fabulous account of the wonderful ſtructure of this dialect. According to him, it owes the moſt extenſive and copious harveſt of words to a very inadequate number of primitive roots, and theſe he chuſes to call the *caput mortuum* of the language; as not being words of themſelves, but certain ſounds bearing a relation to certain ideas. The elements to which he alludes, and of which he has miſquoted an inſtance, fall far ſhort of thoſe comprehenſive faculties which he has beſtowed on them. They are ſimply the Roots of Verbs, and are even ſo denominated in the very title of the book from whence he muſt have borrowed his inaccurate examples. Their number is about ſeven hundred; and it muſt be granted that to them, as to the verbs of moſt other languages, a very plentiful ſtock of verbal nouns owes its origin; but I by no means believe that they exceed thoſe of the Greek either in quantity or variety.

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The fundamental part of the Shanſcrit language is divided into three claſſes: *Dhaat* or roots of verbs, (Dupont's primitive elements) *Shubd* or original nouns, and *Evya* or particles. Theſe latter are ever indeclinable as in other idioms: but the words comprehended in the two former claſſes muſt be prepared by certain additions and inflexions to fit them for a place in compoſition. And here it is that the art of the Grammarian has found room to expand itſelf, and to employ all the powers of refinement. Not a ſyllable, not a letter can be added or altered but by regimen; not the moſt trifling variation of the ſenſe in the minuteſt ſubdiviſion of declenſion or conjugation can be effected without the application of ſeveral rules: and all the different forms for every change of gender, number, caſe, perſon, tenſe, mood or degree are methodically arranged for the aſſiſtance of the memory; reſembling (though on a ſcale infinitely more extenſive) the compilations of *propria quae maribus* and *as in preſenti.*

Had Dupont been leſs bigotted to his ſyſtem of a *caput mortuum*, he muſt have reflected that a verb and a noun are equally neceſſary to the conſtruction of a ſentence, and to the very intelligibility of ſpeech; and had he gained a proper inſight into the Shanſcrit, he would have been fully convinced, that its elementary parts are made up of theſe two genera with the addition of particles.

To this triple ſource I conceive that every word of truly Indian original in every provincial and ſubordinate dialect of all Hindoſtan may ſtill be traced by a laborious and critical analyſis; and all ſuch terms as are thoroughly proved to bear no relation to any one of the Shanſcrit roots, I would conſider as the production of ſome remote and foreign idiom, ſubſequently ingrafted upon the main ſtock. A judicious inveſtigation of this principle would probably throw a new light upon the firſt invention of many arts and ſciences, and open a freſh mine of philological diſcoveries.

Excluſive of the Shanſcrit, there are three different dialects applied (tho' not with equal currency) in the kingdom of Bengal: Viz. the Perſian, the Hindoſtanic and the proper Bengaleſe; each of which has its own peculiar department in the buſineſs of the country, and conſequently neither of them can be univerſally adopted to the excluſion of the others.

The Perſian entered Bengal with the Mogul conquerors, and being the language of the court naturally gained a footing in the law and in the revenues; it has alſo for ſome centuries been the common medium of negotiation between the ſeveral ſtates of Hindoſtan, and from thence became an almoſt indiſpenſable qualification for thoſe who were to manage the extenſive affairs of

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the East India Company: so that the accurate and elegant grammar composed by Mr. Jones does equal honour to the cause of learning, and service to his countrymen in Asia. This language is still used by all the Mogul officers of government, in their several departments of accounts and correspondence; as being the dialect of the former ruling power, of which the English have in some degree taken the place, and whose system they have not yet laid aside. From hence arises one capital impediment to the uniformity of political arrangements in Bengal; for while the summary of all public business is kept in one idiom, the detail is invariably confined to another, as I shall presently demonstrate.

The Hindostanic, or Indian language, appears to have been generally spoken for many ages through all proper Hindostan. It is indubitably derived from the Shanscrit, with which it has exactly the same connexion, as the modern dialects of France and Italy with pure Latin. For while the same sounds are almost constantly applied in both languages to represent the same ideas, the inflexions by which they are affected and the modes of grammatical regimen are widely different. The Shanscrit has a dual number both to verbs and nouns, the Hindostanic to neither. Verbs in Shanscrit have the same form for both

both the maſculine and feminine genders; Hindoſtanic verbs are diſtinguiſhed by different terminations for the different ſexes, like thoſe of the Arabic. Theſe are their capital outlines of diſſimilarity; but in the original appropriation of particular words to particular ſenſes, in the idiomatic turns of expreſſion and complexion of ſpeech we may obſerve the ſtrongeſt family likeneſs.

The Characters alſo peculiar to the Hindoſtanic are exactly the ſame with thoſe of the Shanſcrit, but of a ruder ſhape: yet ſtill exhibiting a more accurate reſemblance than is found in many of the Greek letters upon inſcriptions of different Æras.

This primitive Hindoſtanic tongue has by no means preſerved its purity, or its univerſality to the preſent age: for the modern Inhabitants of India vary almoſt as much in language as in Religion. It is well known in what an obſtinate and inviolable obſcurity the Jentoos conceal as well the Myſteries of their Faith, as the Books in which they are contained: and under what ſevere prohibitions their moſt approved Legiſlators have confined the ſtudy of the Shanſcrit to their own principal tribes only. An explanation of it to perſons not qualified for this ſcience by their rank, ſubjected both the teacher and the pupil to very tremendous penalties; but to ſully its purity by imparting the ſlighteſt knowledge of it to ſtrangers was ever cautiouſly avoided as the moſt inexpiable crime. The Pundit who imparted a ſmall

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portion of his language to me, has by no means eſcaped the cenſure of his countrymen: and while he readily diſplayed the principles of his grammar, he has invariably refuſed to develope a ſingle article of his religion. Thus we may ſuppoſe that when the Mahometan Invaders firſt ſettled in India, and from the neceſſity of having ſome medium of communication with their new ſubjects, applied themſelves to the ſtudy of the Hindoſtanic dialect, the impenetrable reſerve of the Jentoos would quickly render its abſtruſer Shanſcrit terms unintelligible; and the Foreigners, unpracticed in the idiom, would frequently recur to their own native expreſſions. New adventurers continually arriving kept up a conſtant influx of exotic words, and the heterogeneous maſs gradually increaſed its ſtock, as conqueſt or policy extended the boundaries of its circulation. But theſe alterations affected words only. The grammatical principles of the original Hindoſtanic, and the ancient forms of conjugation and inflexion remained the ſame; and whilſt the primitive ſubſtantives were excluded or exchanged, the verbs maintained both their inflexions and their regimen. They ſtill ſubſiſt in their priſtine ſtate; and at preſent thoſe perſons are thought to ſpeak this compound idiom with the moſt elegance, who mix with pure Indian verbs the greateſt number of Perſian and Arabic nouns. Such of the Hindoos as have been connected with the Muſſelman

man courts, or admitted to any offices under that government have generally complimented their maſters by a compliance with theſe literary innovations. But the Bramins and all other well-educated Jentoos, whoſe ambition has not overpowered their principles, ſtill adhere with a certain conſcientious tenacity to their primeval tongue, and have many antient books written in its pureſt ſtyle; among which were probably the celebrated Fables of Pilpay (now not to be found.) They continue to apply it to the purpoſes of commerce in Surat, Guzarat and other places on the weſtern Coaſt; and their correſpondence circulates through all Hindoſtan, quite to the interior parts of Bengal; where ſeveral Bankers of this Religion, who have at different times emigrated from the higher countries, carry on a very extenſive traffic. The Characters in which it is written, though all derived from the Shanſcrit, deviate as much from their original exemplar, as our running-hand and italian differ from round-hand. It is ſaid that there are ſeven different ſorts of Indian hands all comprized under the general term *Naagoree*, which may be interpreted *Writing*; and the elegant Shanſcrit is ſtyled *Daeb Naagoree* or the *Writing of the Immortals*; which may not improbably be a refinement from the more ſimple and unpoliſhed Naagoree of the earlier ages. The word *Taagoree* is ſome-

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times uſed to ſignify a looſe or inaccurate character of the Naagoree, but I never could diſcover that any preciſe diſtinction was implied by it. The Bengal letters, ſuch as diſplayed in the following ſheets, are another branch of the ſame ſtock; leſs beautiful than the refined Shanſcrit, but reſembling it no leſs than the Naagoree. They are uſed in *Aſſam* as well as in Bengal, and may be probably one of the moſt antient modes of writing in the world. The Bengaleſe Bramins have all their Shanſcrit books copied in this national alphabet, and tranſpoſe into it all the *Daeb Naagoree* manuſcripts for their own peruſal.

The dialect called by us the *Moors* is that mixed ſpecies of Hindoſtanic, which I have above deſcribed to owe its exiſtance to the Mahometan Conqueſts. In this idiom ſeveral elegant poems and tales have been compoſed by learned Perſian and Mogul authors, and are ſtill extant in the libraries of the curious. Theſe are always written in the Perſian hand, which is by no means calculated for expreſſing the ſound either of the Hindoſtanic vowels or naſal conſonants. The Mahometans of the lower rank have a few books on Religious ſubjects in this language, and in the Naagoree characters; which are alſo uſed by ſome of them in their petty accounts. Europeans on their arrival in India, reduced to a neceſſary intercourſe with Mahome-

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tan ſervants, or Sepoys, habitually acquire from them this idiom in that imperfect and confined ſtate which is the conſequence of the menial condition of their inſtructors: yet this curious ſyſtem of ſtudy hath produced more than one attempt to a Grammar and Vocabulary. The jargon however, ſuch as it is, proves utterly unintelligible to the villagers and peaſants both in Hindoſtan and Bengal, nor is uſed any where, but in large towns frequented by Mahometans and Strangers. On this dialect an ingenious Miſſionary long ſince publiſhed a laborious treatiſe in Latin. He is the earlieſt and may be deemed the only writer on the ſubject, for the latter compoſitions do not deſerve a name.

What the pure Hindoſtanic is to upper India, the language which I have here endeavoured to explain is to Bengal, intimately related to the Shanſcrit both in expreſſions, conſtruction and character. It is the ſole channel of perſonal and epiſtolary communication among the Hindoos of every occupation and tribe. All their buſineſs is tranſacted, and all their accounts are kept in it; and as their ſyſtem of education is in general very confined, there are few among them who can write or read any other idiom: the uneducated, or eight parts in ten of the whole nation, are neceſſarily confined to the uſage of their mother tongue.

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The Board of Commerce at Calcutta, and the ſeveral Chiefs of the ſubordinate Factories cannot properly conduct the India Company's mercantile correſpondence and negotiations, without the intermediate agency of Bengal Interpreters: for the whole ſyſtem of the Inveſtment, in every ſtage of its preparation and proviſion, is managed in the language of the country; in which all the accounts of the Aurungs, (or manufacturing towns) thoſe of the Company's Export Warehouſe, all propoſals and letters from agents, merchants, contractors, weavers, winders, bleachers &c. are conſtantly preſented; and into which all orders to Gomaſtahs, Aumeens and other officers for the purchaſe and procuration of goods muſt be tranſlated.

Important as this language muſt conſequently appear to the Commercial line, its adoption would be no leſs beneficial to the Revenue department. For although the Contracts, Leaſes and other obligations, executed between Government and its immediate dependants and tenants, continue to be drawn out in the Perſian dialect, yet the under Leaſes and engagements, which theſe in their turn grant to the peaſants and cultivators of the ground, and all thoſe copyhold tenures called *Pottahs* are conſtantly written in Bengaleſe. And it may even be doubted whether more than one third of all Jentoo Zemindars, Farmers and other Leſſees of the ſtate can read a ſingle word of their

own accounts and representations, as delivered in their Moonshee's Persian translation.

The internal policy of the kingdom demands an equal share of attention; and the many impositions to which the poorer class of people are exposed, in a country still fluctuating between the relics of former despotic dominion, and the liberal spirit of its present legislature, have long cried out for a remedy. This has lately been proposed in the appointment of gentlemen of mature experience in the manners and customs of the natives to the several divisions and districts of Bengal, to act as justiciary arbitrators between the head farmer and his under tenants: with whom the indigent villager might find immediate and effectual redress from the exactions of an imperious Landlord or grasping Collector, freed from the necessary delays of an ordinary court of justice, and the expence and inconvenience of a regular suit. Such a measure, by holding out to each industrious individual a near prospect of property in his earnings and security in his possessions, promises, in the most effectual manner, to ensure stability to our conquests and popularity to our administration; and will probably set open the British territories as an asylum for the discouraged husbandman, the neglected artist, and oppressed labourer from every quarter of Hindostan. But this important commission will be more immediately, and more

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extensively beneficial, in proportion as it is conferred on those only whom a competent knowledge of the Bengalese has previously qualified for a personal investigation of every unwarrantable exaction, and scrutiny into every complicated account.

Add to this, that there is not one office under the *Nazim* or Mogul administration, nor one provincial or subordinate court of justice in the kingdom where an interpreter for this language is not judged as necessary and as constantly employed as for the Persian: and if any public notices are to be dispersed through the country, or affixed in the great towns, they are always attended with a Bengal translation. In short, if vigour, impartiality and dispatch be required to the operations of government, to the distribution of justice, to the collections of the revenues and to the transactions of commerce, they are only to be secured by a proper attention to that dialect used by the body of the people; especially as it is much better calculated both for public and private affairs by its plainness, its precision and regularity of construction, than the flowery sentences and modulated periods of the Persian.

Another singular advantage which it possesses, is its aptitude for the business of the compting-house. For the Bengal doctrine of numbers, both in the forms of the figures and in their application, nearly approaches to the system adopted in Europe;

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from which nothing can more eſſentially differ than the Perſian mode of cyphering, both in arrangement and application: ſo that thoſe who would be acquainted with the latter, have a new arithmetic as well as a new language to acquire; and if they have any concerns tranſacted through this medium, they muſt undergo the ſubſequent trouble of reducing their Perſian accounts to the European form; whereas thoſe of the Bengal accomptant require nothing more than an accurate copyiſt.

The great number of letters in the Bengal alphabet, and the intricate variety of their combinations may perhaps at firſt ſight ſtrike the learner as an almoſt inſuperable difficulty. But this is his only impediment; for the grammatical part is ſimple, tho' diffuſe, and compleat without being complex. Its rules are plain, and its anomalies few. So that if he will reſolve to gain a thorough knowledge of each particular article as he proceeds, without trifling away his time in anticipated peruſals, and needleſs references to the more advanced chapters, he will ſoon have reaſon to be ſurpriſed at the rapidity of his paſſage over ſo diſheartening an obſtacle.

Nothing need here be remarked on any particular method of ſtudy; that topic has employed much abler pens. Suffice it to mention, that I have ſelected for this grammar as clear a ſet of rules, and given it as comprehenſive an arrangement as I could deviſe.

devise. The task was rendered very laborious by the great multiplicity of observations I had collected, and by the fresh matter which continually occurred from my repeated applications to the Shanscrit; of which language I have thought necessary to include within my design such of the grammatical principles, as might throw a direct, or even a collateral light on those of the Bengalese. To the curious and intelligent this will probably be the most interesting part of the work; and I was willing to omit nothing that might tend to instruct or to convince. For this reason I have been scrupulously minute in the insertion of examples to every rule, and prolix in my observations upon general grammar. The path which I have attempted to clear was never before trodden; it was necessary that I should make my own choice of the course to be pursued, and of the landmarks to be set up for the guidance of future travellers. I wished to obviate the recurrence of such erroneous opinions as may have been formed by the few Europeans who have hitherto studied the Bengalese; none of them have traced its connexion with the Shanscrit, and therefore I conclude their systems must be imperfect. For if the Arabic language (as Mr. Jones has excellently observed) be so intimately blended with the Persian as to render it impossible for the one to be accurately understood without a moderate knowledge of the other; with still more propriety

priety may we urge the impoſſibility of learning the Bengal dialect without a general and comprehenſive idea of the Shanſcrit: as the union of theſe two languages is more cloſe and more general; and as they bear an original relation and conſanguinity to each other, which cannot even be ſurmiſed with reſpect to the Arabic and Perſian.

When the learner has made ſome proficiency in the firſt rudiments, he cannot follow a more able or more expeditious guide than Mr. Jones: who in the preface to his Perſian Grammar has preſcribed an admirable ſyſtem of ſtudy, the utility of which is abundantly proved by the wonderful extent of his own attainments. By an adherence to his plan this language may ſoon be acquired ſo far as to open the way to converſation and ſhort correſpondence with the natives; after which the progreſs of knowledge will ever be proportionate to the aſſiduity of the ſtudent.

It may not be ſuperfluous in this place to remark, that a grammar of the pure Bengal dialect can not be expected to convey a thorough idea of the modern jargon of the kingdom. The many political revolutions it has ſuſtained, have greatly impaired the ſimplicity of its language; and a long communication with men of different Religions, countries and manners has rendered foreign words in ſome degree familiar to a Bengal ear.

ear. The Mahometans have for the moſt part introduced ſuch terms as relate to the functions of their own Religion, or the excerciſe of their own laws and government; the Portuguese have ſupplied them with appellations of ſome European arts and inventions: and in the environs of each foreign colony the idiom of the native Bengaleſe is tinctured with that of the ſtrangers who have ſettled there.

Upon the ſame principle, ſince the influence of the Britiſh nation has ſuperceded that of its former conquerors, many terms of Britiſh derivation have been naturalized into the Bengal vocabulary. For as the laws, the revenues and the commerce are gradually falling into new hands and are conducted by a new ſyſtem, new denominations will neceſſarily ariſe to the excluſion of the old. The force of this obſervation may particularly be proved from thoſe places in which the greateſt part of the India Company's inveſtment is provided; where a great number of the terms relating to trade are directly borrowed from the Engliſh. So in all the country Courts of Juſtice the words *Decree*, *Appeal*, *Warrant*, *Summons*, and many others are conſtantly applied and underſtood by the whole body of the people.

The following work preſents the Bengal language meerly as derived from its parent the Shanſcrit. In the courſe of my deſign I have avoided, with ſome care, the admiſſion of ſuch

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words as are not natives of the country, and for that reaſon have ſelected all my inſtances from the moſt authentic and antient compoſitions But I would adviſe every perſon who is deſirous to diſtinguiſh himſelf as an accurate tranſlator to pay ſome attention both to the Perſian and Hindoſtanic dialects; ſince in the occurrences of modern buſineſs, as managed by the preſent illiterate generation, he will find all his letters, repreſentations and accounts interſperſed with a variety of borrowed phrazes or unauthorized expreſſions. Such I hope have no place in theſe ſheets; and as I cannot be accuſed of interfering with the province of thoſe who may have illuſtrated either of the other dialects of India, ſo I may with confidence affirm that I have not been guided or aſſiſted in my reſearches by thoſe of any preceding Author. The errors and defects of this compilation are entirely my own; however copious they may be found, I have employed the moſt unwearied application to correct and expunge them: and if I have been in the ſmalleſt degree inſtrumental in exciting the attention of the curious, or in gratifying the taſte of the diſcerning, I hope ſo much will be allowed me in the oppoſite ſcale.

The public curioſity muſt be ſtrongly excited by the beautiful characters which are diſplayed in the following work: and although my attempt may be deemed incompleat or unworthy of

notice,

notice, the book itself will always bear an intrinsic value, from its containing as extraordinary an instance of mechanic abilities as has perhaps ever appeared. That the Bengal letter is very difficult to be imitated in steel will readily be allowed by every person who shall examine the intricacies of the strokes, unequal length and size of the characters, and the variety of their positions and combinations. It was no easy task to procure a writer accurate enough to prepare an alphabet of a similar and proportionate body throughout, and with that symmetrical exactness which is necessary to the regularity and neatness of a fount. Mr. Bolts (who is supposed to be well versed in this language) attempted to fabricate a set of types for it, with the assistance of the ablest artists in London. But as he has egregiously failed in executing even the easiest part, or primary alphabet, of which he has published a specimen, there is no reason to suppose that his project when compleated, would have advanced beyond the usual state of imperfection to which new inventions are constantly exposed.

The advice and even sollicitation of the Governor General prevailed upon Mr. Wilkins, a gentleman who has been some years in the India Company's civil service in Bengal, to undertake a set of Bengal types. He did, and his success has exceeded every expectation. In a country so remote from all connexion with

artiſts, he has been obliged to charge himſelf with all the various occupations of the Metallurgiſt, the Engraver, the Founder and the Printer. To the merit of invention he was compelled to add the application of perſonal labour. With a rapidity, unknown in Europe he ſurmounted all the obſtacles which neceſſarily clog the firſt rudiments of a difficult art, as well as the diſadvantages of ſolitary experiment; and has thus ſingly on the firſt effort exhibited his work in a ſtate of perfection which in every part of the world has appeared to require the united improvements of different projectors, and the gradual poliſh of ſucceſſive ages.

The gentlemen at the head of Indian affairs do not want to be told of the various impoſitions and forgeries with which Bengal at preſent abounds, in Pottahs, (or Leaſes) in Bonds and other written ſecurities of property; in Rowanahs and Duſtucks, in Orders and Notices of government iſſued in the country languages; as well as in all the tranſactions of commerce: and alſo in the Proceſſes, Warrants and Decrees of the ſupreme and inferior Courts of Judicature; all of which afford ample ſcope for the exertion of Mr. Wilkins's ingenuity.

His ſucceſs in this branch has enabled Great Britain to introduce all the more ſolid advantages of European literature among a people whom ſhe has already reſcued from Aſiatic ſlavery,

very, to promote the circulation of wealth, by giving new vigour and dispatch to business, and to forward the progress of civil society by facilitating the means of intercourse.

Even the credit of the nation is interested in marking the progress of her conquests by a liberal communication of Arts and Sciences, rather than by the effusion of blood: and policy requires that her new subjects should as well feel the benefits, as the necessity of submission.

As some supernumerary copies of this essay are intended to be dispersed separate from the work to which it serves as an introduction, I have thought it might be agreeable to the reader to have it accompanied with a short specimen of the language and character on which it is composed; for which purpose I have inserted the following Bengal ode, which was composed last year by an inhabitant of Hoogly, with its translation.

গীত

গীত

বুঝিতে নাপারি প্রাননাথ এমার কেমন পিরিতি ।১।

জাতি মজাইয়া জুগিনি করিয়া তেজিলা গুন
বতী ।২।

কলঙ্ক তরঙ্গে ভাসাইয়া তরি ছাড়িয়া দিলা হালি
হয়্যা কাণ্ডারি নাপাইয়া গুন অমনি ডুবিল কেন
কৈলাহে এমতিঃ ।৩।

সরম ভরম যে কিছু ছিল তরনি সহিত ডুবিয়া
গেল এইসে করিলা অবলার গুনে রাখিলা খেয়া
তি ।৪।

দুখের ঘরে বন্দি করিয়া অনঙ্গ আনল ভেজাইয়া
দিয়া কোন অভিলাসে বিরহ বাতাসে জালাইলা
জুবতী ।৫।

সুপথ দেখাইয়া ভুলাইয়া নারী কুপথে ফেলাইলা
করিয়া চাতুরি যাবত বাচিব তাবত ঘুসিব তো
মার এডাকাতি ।৬।

লালচন্দ্ ভাগে কহিছে বানি মিছা খেদ আর কি
কর ধ্বনি জান্যা সুন্যা কেনো নন্দলাল সনে আগে
মজাইলা মতি ।৭।

A Bengal Song.

" I cannot conceive, my love, the nature of thy affection,
" That thou shouldst seduce a coy girl from her sect, and then
" leave her to wander alone.
" Thou hast launched my boat upon the waves of dishonour,
" and afterwards forsaken it. The helm remained, but for
" want of a pilot it sunk outright. Why hast thou done this?
" Modesty and character all that I had perished with the boat.
" Thou art the cause of this, and hast left me a name among
" my family.

" When thou hadst enslaved me in the house of affliction, and
" set to it the flame of desire,
" Why didst thou blow up the fire with the breath of perfidy?
" Under the pretence of leading me into a fair road, thou
" didst deceive me,
" And hast treacherously turned away from me in a crooked
" path.
" As long as I live, I will remember this thy treachery.
" Laalchundo Naag sings, O fair one, why dost thou vainly
" lament? Wherefore didst thou at first exchange hearts with
" Nundoo Laal, having known and heard of his fickleness?